

M • E • N • U REVIEW

News for Food Service Operators and Employees
Public Health – Seattle & King County, Environmental Health Division February 2005

From the desk of Rick Miklich,
Food & Facilities Manager

New Food Code effective May 2, 2005!

As we head into 2005, there are some fundamental changes coming for food safety in Washington State. After many months of collaboration, representatives from the food industry, local health departments and the State Department of Health completed the new Washington State food code. This regulatory agency-food industry partnership created a practical and sensible set of regulations to help provide consistency and a science-based approach to providing safe food to your customers.

The Washington State Board of Health passed the new food code on September 8. It will be presented to the King County Board of Health for adoption this spring.

The new food code is similar to the one we've been using since 1992, but it does have major additions and changes. We'll all have a lot to learn as we implement the new code. Questions will inevitably arise so please feel free to call your local health inspector or regional office for answers. We're eager to work with you to make this transition a smooth and easy process. Here is a list of some of the most important new and major changes to the code:

Food Preparation

Cold holding

- 4 Hold Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) at 41°F.
- 4 There is a 5-year grace period for replacing existing refrigeration equipment that cannot hold the food temperature at 41°F.

Cooking temperatures

- 4 The top and bottom surface of intact whole-muscle beef steaks must reach 145°F or above. Taking the internal temperature is not necessary.
- 4 Ostrich meat, injected meats, and ground meats must reach an internal temperature of 155°F for 15 seconds.
- 4 Eggs, fish, meat, and pork must be cooked to an internal temperature of 145°F and held at that temperature for 15 seconds.
- 4 Poultry must still be cooked to an internal temperature of 165°F and held at that temperature for 15 seconds.
- 4 Microwave cooking: Cook all PHF to 165°F, stir, and let stand for 2 minutes before serving.



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Save this newsletter to refer to
on code changes.

 **Public Health**
Seattle & King County

HEALTHY PEOPLE. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.



City of Seattle



King County

- 4 Cooking large pieces of frozen meat without pre-thawing is now allowed, except in temporary establishments. Temporary establishments may cook frozen meats only 4 inches thick or less.

Cooling

Foods may be cooled using one of these two methods:

- 4 Shallow pan cooling: Cool product uncovered in the refrigerator, two inches (2") deep or less in the pan.
- 4 A second cooling method is called "two-tier time and temperature cooling": Cool product down from 140°F to 70°F within the first two (2) hours. Cool from 70°F to 41°F within the next four (4) hours. This method requires that you monitor and record times and temperatures. If you use this method, your inspector will ask to see the time and temperature logs.
- 4 Pre-chilling the ingredients for preparing PHF salads and sandwiches is no longer required.

Heating/reheating

- 4 Fruits and vegetables must be heated to 140°F degrees before being put into hot holding equipment.
- 4 Previously cooked foods must be reheated to 165°F within two (2) hours, and kept at that temperature for 15 seconds, if they are to be held hot before serving.
- 4 Reheated food must be kept hot at 140°F.
- 4 Exception to (2) hour reheating regulation: mobile units and temporary events must still rapidly reheat foods to 165°F and hold the temperature for 15 seconds within (1) one hour.

Prevent contamination

- 4 "No bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods" (foods that won't be cooked or reheated before serving) is already in effect

in King County.

Any exception to this policy requires a safe food plan that must be approved by Public Health.



- 4 Single-use gloves must be discarded when soiled, damaged, or the food worker changes tasks.

Time as a safe food control

- 4 The amount of time a food is kept out at room temperature may be used instead of the temperature of the food as a "safe food control." Using this method will require written procedures that your inspector will ask to review during your inspections. Please call your inspector, or speak to him/her at your next inspection, to learn more about how this "time as safe food control" regulation works.



Other new or changed food safety practices for commercial establishments:

Approved source

- 4 Potentially hazardous foods (PHF) must be 41°F or less when received from your distributor.
- 4 Mollusk-type shellfish must not be mixed with shellfish from other growing areas. Keep all shellfish in its original labeled container. Identification labels must be kept for 90 days.
- 4 Fish served raw, except tuna, must be previously frozen in order to kill parasites.

Employee hygiene

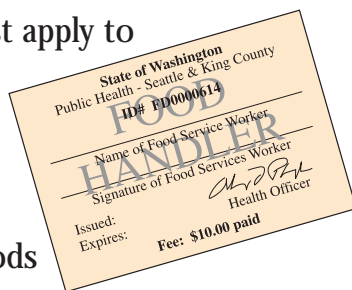
- 4 Handwashing must take at least 20 seconds and include a 10-15 second scrubbing, a thorough rinsing and complete drying.
- 4 Food preparers may not wear nail polish or artificial nails unless gloves are also worn. Food preparers may not wear jewelry on their hands and arms. (Engagement and wedding rings may be worn if they are covered by gloves.)

Equipment

- 4 Food contact surfaces must be cleaned every 4 hours and between different raw animal foods.

Exempt from permit

- 4 Establishments must apply to Public Health if they wish to have a permit exemption.
- 4 There is now a statewide list of foods that may be served without a permit. However, food workers working with unpackaged foods must still have a current food worker card and all food workers must follow safe handling rules when serving these foods.



Person in charge:

This new regulation requires that a designated person is present and in charge during all hours of kitchen operation.



The person in charge must;

- be able to demonstrate knowledge of food safety;
- know when to exclude ill food workers; and
- insure that food workers follow food safety regulations.

Reduced oxygen packaging

- 4 In order to use reduced oxygen packaging you must apply for a variance, and have a HACCP plan and safe food training.

Non-commercial food service

Donated foods

- 4 There are minimal provisions for donated food to distributing organizations.
- 4 Organizations that distribute donated food do not need a permit.
- 4 Donors and charitable kitchens are exempt from the regulations.



Potlucks

- 4 Non-commercial potlucks are exempt from the regulations.

Enforcement

- 4 A significant new requirement: if you don't have up-to-date food worker cards for each worker, the establishment will get a red critical violation.
- 4 Except for refrigeration units, existing physical facilities are not required to meet the new requirements unless a public health hazard has been identified. Public Health may grant a waiver or variance for many provisions.
- 4 The minimum frequency for inspections is once every 6 months, or less often if a risk-based plan is developed by the health department.

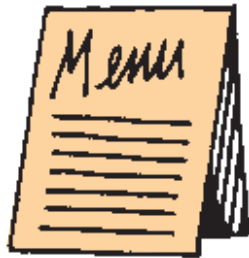


4 Definitions:

- The definition for “food establishment” was changed to exempt even more establishments serving food with a low risk of causing food borne illness.
- The definition for “temporary establishment” now includes temporary events that continue for a maximum of 3 days per week.

Required: A consumer advisory plus health risk statement...

In addition to the consumer advisory you already have on your menu if you're serving raw or undercooked meats, fish, shellfish, poultry, eggs or non-pasteurized juice, you will now need to add a health risk statement or “reminder” to the menu. The reminder lets customers know that eating these undercooked foods may cause food borne illness.



The “reminder” must be on the same page as the consumer advisory, and the text must be easily readable.

The following are some examples of how you might add the advisory and health risk reminder to your menu:

Oysters on the half shell (served raw)*

Caesar Salad (raw egg in dressing)*

Hamburgers cooked to order*

*eating raw or undercooked meats, poultry, eggs, fish, or shellfish may increase your risk of food borne illness, especially if you are a young child, an older adult, or have certain immune compromising illnesses.



Selling hard crusted breads retail?

If your hard crusted breads are packaged in paper bags for self service, be certain that the paper bag completely covers the bread. One end may be open, but the bread must be completely covered by the bag.



Your inspector will be setting up an educational visit to help you understand the new code. However, please remember that knowing all of the food safety regulations is up to you. You may link to the new food code from the Public Health-Seattle & King County Web site at: www.metrokc.gov/health/foodsfty

Food and Facilities Who's Who

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Reminder: Please send your permit fees to:

Downtown Environmental Health
2124 4th Avenue, 4th Floor
Seattle, WA 98121

Food Handlers Permit 2005 schedule

To stay current on the schedule and for more
information, please check the web site at:
www.metrokc.gov/health/foodsfty or
call 206-296-4791.

Monday

Renton Technical College
Campus Center Building "I"
3000 NE 4th Street,
Renton
3:30 pm and 6:30 pm

Tuesday

Downtown Seattle
Exchange Building,
2nd and Marion St.
821 2nd Avenue, 3rd Floor
DCHS Board Room
8:30 am 12:00 pm 2:30 pm

Note: Tuesday classes are limited to 80 people for each
time period. Arrive Early.

Wednesday

Magnuson Park
Northeast Seattle
along Lake Washington
7400 Sand Point Way NE
Community Activity Center,
Building #406
Garden Room,
(74th Street Entrance off
of Sand Point Way
Very last building on left)

9:00 am Classes in English, Korean, Russian
1:00 pm Classes in English, Spanish,
Vietnamese
4:00 pm Classes in English, Cantonese,
Mandarin

Every 2nd and 4th Friday of the month

Sammamish Valley
Grange, Redmond /
Woodinville area
14654 - 148th Avenue NE
(East of Ste. Michelle Winery)
10:00 am and 2:00 pm

Every 3rd Saturday of the month

Bellevue at
Factoria Cinemas
3505 Factoria Blvd. SE
At the intersection of I-90
and Factoria Blvd.
9:00 am



Clip and Save

Do you know.....?

Food Code changes

1. As of May 2nd, 2005, not having a current food worker card for each food worker will be a red critical violation.
True False
2. The new regulations make it necessary to add information to the menu about the health risk of undercooked or raw foods.
True False
3. No monitoring of cooling foods is necessary if it is placed 2 inches or less in the pan, and left uncovered in the refrigerator.
True False
4. If you cannot bring the food in your cooler down to 41°F, but you can maintain it at 45°F, you will have 5 years from May 2nd, 2005 to get new equipment.
True False
5. When the new regulation goes into effect there must be a “person in charge” during all hours of operation who is knowledgeable about food safety practices.
True False



1. True: Inspectors will ask to see the food worker cards, and if they aren't current for each employee, it will result in red critical points.
2. True: As of May 2nd it will be necessary to add the health risk to eating undercooked foods to the menu. The message must be clear and easy to read.
3. True: You won't have to monitor the cooling process if you put foods into the cooler in containers that are uncovered, and food being 2 inches deep or less.
4. True: You will have up to 5 years to replace your refrigeration equipment if it can hold foods at 45°F, but can't quite reach the new cold holding temperature, 41°F.
5. True: A “person in charge” must be on duty during all hours of operation, who is knowledgeable about food safety practices.